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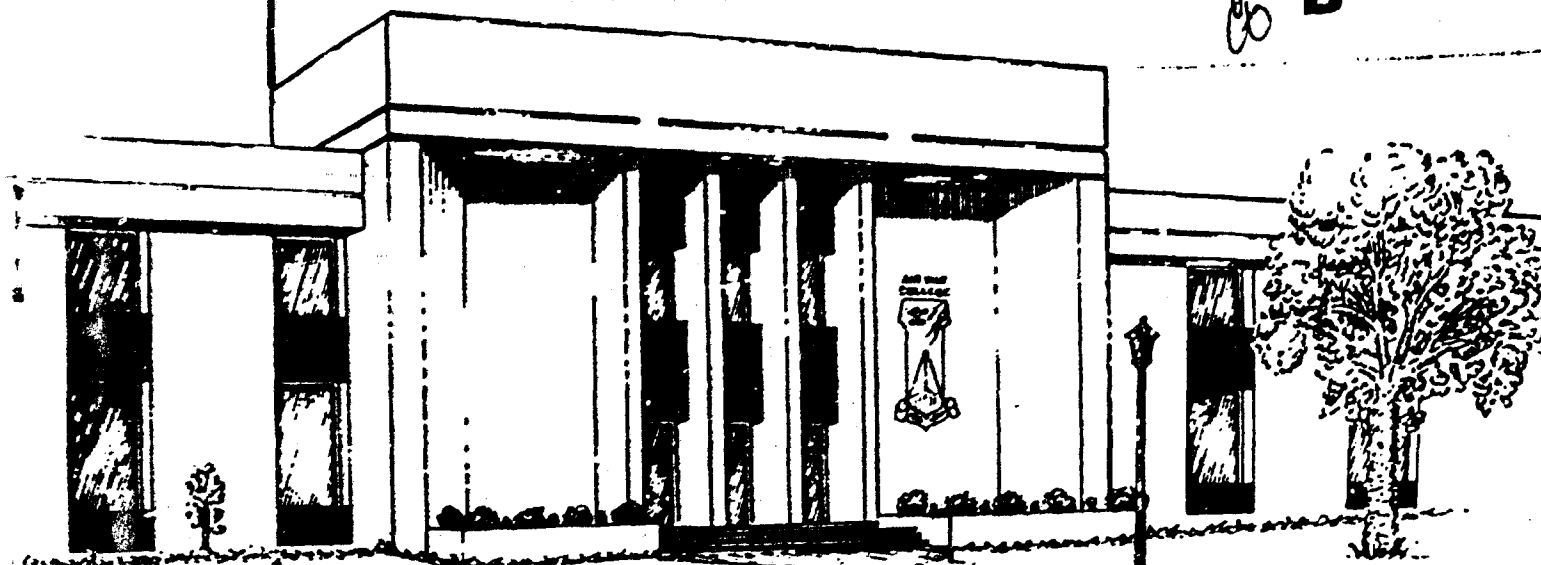
RESEARCH REPORT

HAS GOLDWATER-NICHOLS IMPROVED THE UNITED STATES MILITARY'S
ABILITY TO MEET STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES?

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AIR UNIVERSITY
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, ALABAMA

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ABILITY TO MEET STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES?

by

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A DEFENSE ANALYTICAL STUDY SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

TITLE: Has Goldwater-Nichols Improved the United States Military's Ability to Meet Strategic Objectives?

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→ This paper begins with a brief review of the National Security Act of 1947 which established the present Department of Defense. It then reviews the more significant pieces of legislation which have shaped the present structure, and formed the command relationships in the United States military. The principal changes made to the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the combatant commands by the Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986 are then reviewed. Following that is a discussion of how those changes have affected the United States military's capability to meet the United States' national strategic objectives. The analysis is made within the context of the conflict continuum and the strategic objectives that are to be achieved along that continuum. (RW)



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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Colonel Albert W. Perez II (B.S. Louisiana State University and M.A. Texas Christian University) entered the United States Air Force in 1969 through the Reserve Officer's Training Corps program and received his pilot wings in 1970. He completed 186 combat missions in Vietnam in B-52D aircraft. In addition to B-52 crewmember duties as an instructor pilot, Colonel Perez has had assignments to the Strategic Air Command Headquarters as a personnel officer in the war and contingency plans division, as a B-52 squadron commander and prior to attending the Air War College as Chief of the Strategic Division, Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Acquisition, Headquarters Air Force, at the Pentagon. Colonel Perez is a graduate of the Air War College, Class of 1989.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The United States military is one of the United States' primary instruments of national power. As such, it is essential that the military's ability be evaluated on how it supports and meets national security objectives. Some see the military only as an organization for waging war; but, it is more. The military is a deterrent capability that can show visible presence and which can be used to support national objectives in a variety of ways. The United States military can help reinforce the United States' foreign policy initiatives both from a diplomatic and military cooperative viewpoint. For these reasons, it is imperative that the United States military be able to meet strategic objectives.

The Goldwater-Nichols Reorganization Act of 1986 passed Congress by an overwhelming majority and was signed into law by President Reagan on 1 October 1986. The law contains some of the most significant changes to the functions and structure of the United States military since the National Security Act of 1947 which established the present Department of Defense. (1:100-101) The bill became law as a result of growing concern by many senior leaders over a lack of military capability. (2:4-5)

By reorganizing the Department of Defense, Congress believed they could correct the problems they saw in the United States military. Goldwater-Nichols was designed to increase civilian control of the military, improve the military's advice to the senior civilian leaders, improve military effectiveness and "to increase attention to the formulation of strategy and to contingency planning." (3:2169) Many military reformers have said that they wanted to improve military effectiveness and enhance military strategic thinking; however, when it comes time to make the changes and evaluate the results, the reformers address the economic and managerial aspects rather than examining the military for what it is, a major instrument of national power. (4:20) Changes made to the Department of Defense between World War II and Goldwater-Nichols, were aimed at changing functions and organizations to fit the fiscal planning and weapon procurement process. (5:2) The reason for this is defense reformers believe "organizational structure is directly related to organizational performance." (5:182) While Goldwater-Nichols made changes in both structure and function, it also sought to enhance the process of military strategy formulation.

The Goldwater-Nichols bill changes the responsibilities and authority of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the commanders of the unified and specified commands, the

structure and functions of the joint staff, and the responsibilities and organizations of the headquarters of the military departments. The changes came about after several years of work by the executive branch, Congressional committees, members of the military, and various private study groups chartered to look at the United States military. (2:12) All of the reviews, studies and testimonies were done with one major goal and that was to find a way to increase the warfighting capability of the United States military. It was perceived that the military had become too bureaucratic and was functioning more as a huge corporation rather than as a fighting force tasked to support national strategic objectives. It was also believed that the military's strategic plans did not have any sense of fiscal reality nor were the plans realistic in dealing with conflicts across the entire spectrum of warfare from terrorist situations to general nuclear war. If this situation were true, then the United States military no longer had the capability to be a viable instrument of national power and therefore was incapable of supporting national strategic objectives. The Goldwater-Nichols bill was passed with the express purpose of improving the United States military's capability to meet strategic objectives. (3:2169-2170) This paper will look at whether that purpose is being achieved.

Chapter II is a brief review of the major changes to the Department of Defense from the passage of the National Security Act of 1947 to the enactment of Goldwater-Nichols. This examination is made from a strategic capability perspective and it provides a frame of reference with regard to previous changes, how they came about and their effect on the United States' strategic capability.

Chapter III is a synopsis of the Goldwater-Nichols Act with emphasis on the aspects directly related to strategic policy formulation and the United States' warfighting capability. Chapter IV is the analysis of whether Goldwater-Nichols has improved the United States' strategic warfighting capability. Chapter V is a summary of the initiatives and a brief look to the future.

To address the effectiveness of the major changes and particularly, Goldwater-Nichols, in improving the United States military's capability to meet strategic objectives, I evaluate the changes along the conflict continuum versus the military's ability to meet the strategic objectives. Essentially what I am trying to do is integrate the level of conflict, the United States military's capability and the national security objective. It is my contention that the changes enacted under Goldwater-Nichols have strengthened the military's ability to meet strategic objectives because the reforms have strengthened the Chairman of the Joint

Chiefs of Staff's position. strengthened the role of the combatant commanders and have caused the services to radically revise formal professional military education.

CHAPTER II

RECENT HISTORY OF DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE REFORM

Article 1, Section 8 of the Constitution of the United States gives Congress the power to raise and support armies, provide and maintain a navy, make rules for the government and regulation of the land and naval forces, and to provide for organizing, arming and disciplining the militia and for governing such part of them as may be employed in the service of the United States.

Congress has a constitutional responsibility to oversee and regulate the operation of the United States military forces. Congress has always taken this responsibility seriously, it has been particularly active in restructuring and redefining military organization and functions since the end of World War II. While Congress has said it is improving the military, what it has really meant is that it wants to restructure the military according to Congress' view of the threat with the ultimate goal of spending less for defense. (1:X-XI) From the mid-1940s until now, there have been approximately 15 major Department of Defense reorganization studies and about 10 major pieces of congressional legislation which have mandated the

reorganization of some portion of the Department of Defense or redefined the military's functions to fix real and perceived problems. Many of the changes since the late 1940s have increased the Secretary of Defense's power and decreased the responsibility of the military departments. (2:43) This chapter will briefly review the major changes resulting from enactment of the National Security Act of 1947 to the passage of the Goldwater-Nichols Act in 1986.

In order to restructure the Department of Defense, add a third service, the Air Force, and incorporate some of the ways the military functioned during World War II, Congress enacted the National Security Act of 1947. (3:496) While the military was being restructured, the United States was also incurring new global responsibilities. These global responsibilities required a new national strategy to deal with other countries in the world, particularly our greatest adversary, the Soviet Union. The new global responsibilities and the strategic policy of containment required that the United States integrate all of the primary instruments of national power. (4:25-27) Furthermore, the new responsibilities required that the president have a coherent and consolidated military policy that incorporated the nation's interests and the military instrument to support the nation's security requirements. Congress and the president wanted a consolidated military department

which could support this policy through joint cooperation.

(5:1) The National Security Act of 1947 was therefore designed "to promote the national security by providing for a Secretary of Defense; for a National Military Establishment; for a Department of the Army, a Department of the Navy, and a Department of the Air Force." (3:495) The National Security Act of 1947 created the Office of Secretary of Defense and made him the principal assistant to the President for National Security affairs. (3:500) In addition, the Act established the Joint Chiefs of Staff within this new National Military Establishment. (3:505) The Chiefs of Staff of each of the three separate services; Army, Navy and Air Force were designated as the Joint Chiefs of Staff with the duties to make strategic plans and give strategic direction to the military forces, provide for each service's logistical responsibilities, establish the necessary unified commands and to be "the principal military advisors to the President and the Secretary of Defense." (3:505) The law specified that the unified commanders would report directly through their respective service Chief of Staff. (3:499-505) One important point was that this act did not provide for a military chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff because that function was to be filled by the Secretary of Defense. The United States' basic military strategy at this time was massive retaliation and it was

believed that because of the United States' nuclear supremacy, there would not be any conflict. (4:42-49) Therefore, the warring strategy which was envisioned was at the upper end of the conflict continuum, specifically, general nuclear war. It was generally felt the United States' military forces were overwhelmingly superior. The strategists also believed there was a very low probability of war. (4:49-50) Therefore the National Security Act of 1947 accomplished what it was designed to do. It codified the wartime military organization into a peacetime organization which met national security objectives and was strategically capable.

Over the next few years, the world situation changed. President Truman saw the Communist threat expanding especially in Asia. The Soviet military capability was rapidly growing and the United States also had to consider likely confrontation in other countries where communism was a threat such as China, Italy, Greece and Turkey. (4:69) While the United States' strategic policy remained one of containment, there was now the possibility of conflicts with the Soviets in other regions of the world. (4:69) Truman wanted advice from the military and he wanted a single point of contact in the military to provide that information to him. (7:73-75)

The position of Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff was established by the National Security Act of 1949. While the Act created the Chairman's position, the Chairman did not have a vote in matters before the Joint Chiefs of Staff. (5:239) The 1949 Act also precluded the service chiefs from testifying before Congress in opposition to the administration's position. (5:239-240) Again, the primary strategic thinking was in planning for general nuclear war. However, the area of conflict switched from one between the United States and the Soviet Union to include conflicts in other regions of the world. (4:70-71) In evaluating the military's capability to meet strategic objectives, the United States was still at the upper level of the spectrum of conflict and while some people believed the possibility of war had increased, the United States still had the forces to fight and win any possible conflict. (4:95-97)

The 1950s saw the United States involved in the Korean conflict, an increase in Soviet military capability and a president with new military reform ideas. Because of the increased potential for conflicts throughout the world and a need for a coordinated military strategy to address these new situations, President Eisenhower recommended and Congress implemented several changes to the Department of Defense in 1953. (5:78-83) It is also important to note that during the 1950s, the secretary issued no formal

annual policy guidance to the services and defense agencies. only fiscal guidance." (6:217) This meant that the Chairman and Joint Chiefs of Staff were responsible for devising their own strategies as they felt necessary.

The principal changes made in 1953 were that the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff now had authority to approve and make appointments to and manage the work of the Joint Staff. In addition, the responsibility for the conduct of operations was given to the unified commanders. (5:86-90) President Eisenhower wanted the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to be able to act more independently and the law gave the unified and specified commanders more regional responsibility. (6:175-177) The net effect was that the United States military was becoming more capable to deal with conflicts other than just nuclear war. (4:96-97)

The next major reorganization took place in 1958 when Congress passed the Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1958. This act was designed to streamline reporting procedures and to improve the United States' warfighting capability by introducing a measure of jointness into military planning, training and operations. The act modified reporting procedures in that it removed the civilian secretaries of the military departments from the chain of command. The service chiefs no longer had command authority over their forces because operational control of

forces came under the unified commanders. (7:3275-3276)

With regard to the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Act stipulated that the Joint Chiefs could only act with approval of the Secretary of Defense, it gave the Chairman a vote and the Act gave him authority over the Joint Staff. (7:3274-3275)

Again, Eisenhower's reforms were aimed at making the Joint Chiefs more autonomous from the Services so the military could provide more effective and less parochial views and recommendations. (6:176-177)

These changes showed a realization that the conflict spectrum was expanding to include conventional as well as nuclear war. In evaluating the military's capability, I believe people still looked to the nuclear forces and thought they were sufficient to meet the threat. Therefore, as long as the United States maintained its missile and bomber development programs, there was little risk of the United States military being unable to meet strategic objectives. Military strategists believed the United States would only be involved in a conventional war (similar to the World War II conflict with traditional fighting forces) or a nuclear war. The military was still using traditional military strategies and was still being organized along traditional command lines and with the applicable forces to meet the threats at the conventional and nuclear points on the conflict continuum. (6:179)

The last major revision to the Department of Defense which affected the strategic capability of the military came in the form of the Planning, Programming and Budgeting System (PPBS) which was introduced by Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara in the early 1960s. Secretary McNamara believed in leadership by complete control and he believed all military force and weapon acquisition decisions could be made according to a cost-benefit analysis. McNamara was a very strong Secretary of Defense and his staff (Office of the Secretary of Defense) became the policy makers in the Department of Defense. (6:213) McNamara was also directly involved in strategy formulation. McNamara would send "draft presidential memorandum (DPM)...to the White House for presidential approval or to provide the president with information." (6:217) One of McNamara's first DPMs was on strategic nuclear forces and had been written by his staff. (6:217) Because of this, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff lost much of his power and influence in setting policies and making decisions. (6:213) The military was without a strong spokesperson and strategic thinking and military decisions based on a strategy were replaced by mathematical calculations and budget figures in the PPBS.

For the reasons highlighted above, the United States was strategically unprepared in terms of doctrine, weapons and manning for employing military forces in other areas of

the conflict spectrum in which the United States was involved between 1960 and 1984. For example, in Vietnam, the United States military was blamed for losing the war. I believe the blame must be shared. The Vietnam War took place below the level of traditional conventional war. Because of the political nature of the situation, the military was restricted in target selection and areas of operation. The military was also restricted in the forces necessary to win some of the engagements and Congress, in an attempt to influence the military's operations, cut off funds. (6:213) On the other hand, the United States military did go into Vietnam with a World War II approach; however, that strategy was more a product of the world situation then it was of military expediency. As a result of the loss in Vietnam, the Mayaguez incident, and the Marine bombing in Beirut, the United States military was accused of being unprepared and incapable of supporting the United States' national security objectives.

During the period between World War II and Goldwater-Nichols, the United States military experienced several major structural reorganizations and had to develop concepts and force structure to meet changing strategic requirements. The United States went from having a strategic policy of containment with nuclear weapons and general nuclear war to a strategic policy that incorporates global commitments

requiring forces capable of accomplishing any mission along the conflict continuum. In addition, the decline in the influence of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff caused concern over the military's ability to meet strategic objectives.

CHAPTER III
GOLDWATER-NICHOLS DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
REORGANIZATION ACT OF 1986

There have been many changes made to the Department of Defense, each made as a response to new national objectives and strategies and each to achieve a specific objective. Some of the changes made in the 1950s were as a result of the new 'strategic thinking' based on longrange strategic aircraft and nuclear weapons. (1:ix) These changes were made to define the United States military's role in the world environment. Overall, the 1960s could be characterized by reformers who made changes to the Department of Defense from an analytical perspective and who reduced everything to a quantitative measurement. (1:ix) The changes in the 1970s were the result of the arms race and these reformers wanted to try to control the weapons of mass destruction while still retaining a capable military. (1:ix)

The most recent reform is based on still another view. I believe that view is hinged upon on a mid-1980s perspective of lessening tensions between the superpowers: but, in reaction to an increase in tension at the lower end of the conflict spectrum. I believe these changes were also fiscally driven because of the budget and trade deficits

that the country is experiencing and everyone is trying to get the most they can for the least amount of money.

The most recent and far-reaching reorganization of the Department of Defense, known as the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 has been under study and discussion for a long time. Over the last 15 years members of Congress, serving and former Joint Chiefs of Staff, other retired and active military personnel, journalists and members of the news media have blamed the military's poor performance in Vietnam, the attempted Mayaguez rescue, the aborted Iranian hostage attempt, the bombing of the Marine barracks in Beirut, and the need to use commercial pay phones to communicate in Grenada on an inept military that lacked jointness. (2:20-27) It was said that the Chairman and the Joint Chiefs of Staff were not able to provide sound military advice in a timely manner to the President and his staff and that the individual services were so concerned with their own service's equipment, operations and budgets that they neglected and ignored the need to operate as a joint team to support the United States' strategic interests and meet the United States' strategic objectives. (2:42) As a result of this concern, Congress decided to take action to correct the perceived problems.

On 1 October 1986, Public Law 99-433, Title 1, Section 109, titled the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986, was signed into law and became the latest and perhaps the most far reaching piece of legislation to affect the organization of the military since passage of the National Security Act of 1947 which created the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Goldwater-Nichols was the culmination of over three years of work by both the Senate and House of Representatives Committees on Armed Services, namely Senators Barry Goldwater and Sam Nunn and Representative Bill Nichols. The final act was a product of two major Congressionally mandated studies and over 4000 pages of testimony in hearings to the Senate and House of Representatives Subcommittees on Department of Defense Reorganization. The bill provides for means to integrate strategic policy formulation into the military planning process, legislates changes to the Joint Chiefs of Staff command structure, establishes new unified and specified command structures, functions and reporting chains, changes the internal reorganization of the Service's headquarters staffs, and realigns Department of Defense acquisition staffs and operating procedures.

To enhance strategic policy formulation and integrate national strategy objectives and military capability, the following changes were legislated by Goldwater-Nichols:

The Secretary of Defense, in his annual report to Congress must "include a discussion and justification of major military missions (e.g. strategic deterrence, NATO defense) and a discussion of the relationship of foreign policy, major military missions, and military force structure to each other." (3:2183)

The Secretary of Defense is also required to "provide annually to the JCS Chairman written policy guidance for the preparation and review of contingency plans." (3:2183)

With regard to the Chairman, the Joint Chiefs, and the unified and specified commands, the following changes were enacted:

The Chairman was made "the principal military adviser to the President, the National Security Council (NSC) and the Secretary of Defense." (3:2170)

The Chairman will "submit to the President, the NSC, and the Secretary of Defense any JCS member's advice in disagreement or in addition to the Chairman's advice." (3:2171)

The Chairman will "prepare fiscally constrained strategic plans." (3:2171)

The Chairman must tell the Secretary of Defense "the extent to which the program recommendations and budget proposals of the Military Departments conform with the priorities established in strategic plans and with the

operational requirements of the unified and specified combatant commands." (3:2171)

The Chairman "manages the Joint Staff and prescribes its duties and staffing procedures." (3:2717)

"The operational chain of command, unless otherwise directed by the President, runs from the President to the Secretary of Defense to the unified and specified combatant commanders." (3:2171)

"Authorize the President or the Secretary of Defense to place the JCS Chairman in the channel of command communications between the Secretary of Defense and the combatant commanders. (3:2171)

"Authorize the combatant commanders to specify the chains of command and organizational relationships within their commands. (3:2171)

"Strengthen and expand the 'full operational command' authority of combatant commanders." (3:2171)

"Strengthen the authority of the combatant commanders over the selection, retention, and evaluation of their staff members and their subordinate commanders." (3:2171)

The Act is designed to increase the authority and responsibility of the Chairman and the unified and specified commanders. It is intended to create a spirit of jointness within the United States military that will encompass all military planning and operations with an eye toward

improving the military advice to the President and the other civilian leaders. There is one important question that must be addressed. Will these changes improve the United States military's ability to meet strategic objectives?

CHAPTER IV

GOLDWATER-NICHOLS AND OUR WARFIGHTING STRATEGY

As previously noted, the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 is an extensive piece of legislation that has mandated many changes in an attempt to fix perceived operational, functional and organizational problems in the United States Department of Defense. Portions of the Law are designed to improve professional military advice; ensure all divergent military opinions are presented to senior civilian decision-makers; improve joint military operational performance; and give the unified and specified commanders more authority. (1:2169-2161) All of this was done to improve the United States' warfighting capability. Another important aspect of the Law is that it gives more responsibility and authority to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and it makes the Chairman "the principal military advisor to the President, the National Security Council and the Secretary of Defense." (1:2170)

This Chapter will look at whether Goldwater-Nichols has improved the United States military's warfighting capability to meet the United States' strategic objectives. I will first define strategy and then review the United States national security interests, objectives and the resulting national security strategy. Because it is the function of

the United States military to support the national security strategy and meet the national security objectives. these discussions will provide the basis for the analysis of some of the changes mandated by the Goldwater-Nichols reorganization act.

Strategy is the operative concept that links the nation's interests and objectives with the nation's instruments of power, including its military forces. That is the reason for examining and assessing Goldwater-Nichols in a strategic context. Clausewitz says "the theory of strategy must also consider its chief means of execution, the fighting forces." (2:128) In a more recent work, Liddel Hart says strategy is "the art of distributing and applying military means to fulfill the ends of policy." (3:321)

In order to maintain its position in the world and achieve its national security objectives, the United States must have an effective national security policy which incorporates the primary instruments of national power, particularly military power. This policy must identify and prioritize national interests and transform them into viable national objectives. From these objectives, the United States must identify the instrument(s) of national power needed to achieve those objectives. It is the way in which the United States' "national security policy is planned.

administered, and executed [which] has come under increasing attack by...defense reformers." (4:18-19) The reformers say that a "radical revision of this process is necessary if we are to confront the military power of the Soviet Union." (4:19) It is for this reason that Congress added a requirement in Goldwater-Nichols for the Secretary of Defense, with the approval of the President to provide strategy guidance to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. (1:2183)

In broad terms, the United States' national security interests are national survival, individual prosperity and an expanding national economy, a secure world environment; advancement of human rights, access to free international markets, and stable alliances. (5:3) The national security interests are then used to formulate national security objectives. The national security objectives are more specific and are used as "a general guide for strategy in specific situations which call for the coordinated use of national power." (5:3) "To deter hostile attack on the United States...To ensure access to foreign markets, energy, and mineral resources by the United States and its allies and friends...To promote national independence and the growth of free institutions worldwide...To aid in combatting threats to the stability of friendly governments and institutions from insurgencies, subversion, state-sponsored

terrorism and the international trafficking of illicit drugs..." (5:4) are examples of some of the United States' national security objectives. The United States then uses these objectives, coupled with its interests in various areas of the world to define the necessary strategy and select the specific national power, or powers, such as the military, that will be used to attain those objectives.

Usually, military capability to meet strategic objectives is evaluated through an exercise called "force-sizing." (6:211) Through this exercise, an evaluation is made to determine if the forces available are adequate to meet requirements. In the initial evaluation, nuclear forces and their requirements are considered separately from conventional forces and their requirements. In the conventional arena, the primary scenario is the conventional conflict in Europe. (6:211) The reason for considering this first, is this is the most demanding scenario in terms of the numbers of forces needed to meet the objectives. The forces required are then translated into budget requirements and in the past, has been the basis for justifying forces because there was a clear objective and it was fairly easy to justify the force size required. (Usually, the forces required far exceed the numbers that can be bought. (6:212)) However, under the Reagan administration, force-sizing exercises did not take place and the responsibility

for the forces that each service wanted was left up to the individual service. (6:212)

Allowing the services to develop their own force structures had several detrimental consequences. First, the Services could put forth any force structure they wanted because they could develop the one they thought they needed based on what they saw as the strategic need. For example, the 600 ship Navy, the 40 tactical fighter wings, the 18 Army divisions. (6:212) This caused numerous program starts which did not reach fruition. Another detrimental effect was that there was no longer attention being paid to the development of strategy based on the various threats that the United States military might face. Ultimately, the most negative factor was the fact that when the Department of Defense budget went to Congress, Congress was unable to determine which programs should be supported because there was no overall military strategy which the forces were supporting. That is one of the reasons that Congress added a requirement in Goldwater-Nichols for the President to approve the strategy guidance provided to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs by the Secretary of Defense.

In making my assessment of preceding data, I will first discuss the unified and combatant commands, structures and functions. then I will examine the responsibilities and duties of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs as redefined by

Goldwater-Nichols, and then I will close with a few words on two requirements for the Secretary of Defense mandated by Goldwater-Nichols.

Congress revised the structure and functions of the combatant commanders "in order to give more appropriate statutory emphasis to the vast responsibilities of the warfighting commands." (1:2203) A unified command is made up of "forces from two or more military departments, has a broad and continuing mission, and is normally organized on a geographic basis." (1:2203)

The unified commands are the Atlantic Command, Central Command, European Command, Pacific Command, Southern Command, Space Command, Special Operations Command and Transportation Command. While the commands are primarily organized along geographical lines, the last two, Special Operations and Transportation Commands are organized along functional lines. Each of the first five Commands has responsibility for operations in a region of the world and usually employs forces from at least two of the services. The last five commands must be able to support and conduct operations along the conflict spectrum from the peacetime environment to the tactical nuclear level and in the event of general nuclear war. Each command is tasked to maintain a peacetime United States military presence in its region to demonstrate the United States' interest and resolve to

support that region. At the same time the command must have accomplished the planning and the training with the necessary forces to defend the United States' national interests in that area should conflict occur.

Special Operations Command has a unique mission. It is tasked "to provide combat-ready special operations forces for rapid reinforcement of the other unified commands." (7:51) Special Operations Command must also "be prepared to plan and conduct selected special operations if so directed by the president or the secretary of defense." (7:51) It has frequently been cited in defense reorganization studies by reformers who believe "organizational structure is directly related to organizational performance." (8:182) I believe Congress took this view because they legislated the formation of the Special Operations Command to fix a perceived lack of special operations capability in the United States military.

Special operations is one area where there is a definite lack of doctrine or policy to define exactly which type of conflicts special operations should be concerned with. In addition, when Congress established the command, they did not define the command relations between the special Operations commander and the special operations forces that are in the other combatant commands. As I stated previously, the Special Operations command believes

they have a mission that stretches across the broadest of conflict spectrums.

This means Special Operations Command is both a supporting and supported command. Special Operations Command says that its forces must be able to operate along the conflict spectrum "from peacetime operations and low-intensity conflict to conventional and nuclear war." (7:4b) However, the primary mission for Special Operations Command is on the lower end of the continuum in the low-intensity, counterinsurgency area. This command is composed of forces from active and reserve Army, Navy and Air Force units. In addition, the command must know what all of the other command's special operations forces are doing and be able to integrate with and support their operations.

Space Command and Transportation Command have missions that are different from the other unified commands. Transportation Command was formed by combining the Navy's Military Sealift Command, the Army's military Traffic Management Command and The Air Force's Military Airlift Command. The purpose of Transportation Command is to provide common-user airlift, sealift, terminal services and U.S. commercial air and land transportation to deploy, employ and sustain U.S. forces on a global basis." (7:5b)

Space Command is composed of personnel from all three Services and was established "to support joint employment of

military space-related forces and to ensure improved operational support to other unified commands." (7:45) Space Command is responsible for military operations planning, surveillance and warning in space. Space Command supports national interests by making sure the United States has unrestricted access to space and that no one attempts to use space for hostile purposes. (7:45)

A specified command "is composed of U.S. combatant forces normally from a single Military Department, has a broad and continuing mission, and is organized on a functional basis." (1:2203) The two specified commands are the Strategic Air Command and Forces Command.

The Strategic Air Command is a single Service Command composed of the United States Air Force intercontinental ballistic missiles, long range bombers, airborne reconnaissance, and command and control forces tasked with mission of responding on a global basis "across a spectrum of threats to the vital security interests of the United States." (7:61) However, the primary mission of the Strategic Air Command is to provide two-thirds of the United States' nuclear forces which would operate in a general nuclear war.

Goldwater-Nichols did stipulate that the Secretary of Defense should study and consider combining the Strategic Air Command mission and forces with the applicable forces

from the Army and the Navy. (1:2204-2207) I believe combining these forces will enhance the United States' nuclear warfighting capability by aligning functions and forces under a single commander who can easily integrate the forces and personnel necessary to successfully carry out the strategic nuclear deterrent mission. The planning staff is already in place at the Strategic Air Command headquarters in the form of the Joint Strategic Target Planning Staff as well as the intelligence and command and control functions which are also located there. The advantage of making this consolidation would be that a single commander could make a better analysis of the threat and have a coordinated strategy to deal with that threat. Putting all general purpose nuclear forces (excluding nuclear artillery shells, and short range missile forces) and supporting organizations and forces, i.e., tankers, intelligence systems, etc., in a single command, would also enhance budget deliberations as well as providing one commander who could advise in the area of arms reduction. There is one area that could be contentious and that is the issue of sea launched ballistic missiles. The Navy might be reluctant to give up their missile carrying submarines or their missiles.

Forces Command is also a single Service Command composed of forces from the United States Army. The mission of Forces Command is to provide a reserve of combat ready

land troops to support and "reinforce other unified or specified commands." (7:67) Forces Command is also responsible for planning and accomplishing ground defense of the United States. The Command is responsible for operating "as a cornerstone of our nation's deterrence to global conventional or nuclear war." (7:67)

Goldwater-Nichols made several changes in an attempt to improve the warfighting capability of the unified and specified commanders. The bill stipulated that all military forces will be assigned to a unified or specified command. It also directed that the chain of command would go from the President to the Secretary of Defense to the commanders of the unified and specified commands. The legislation also stipulated that those commanders have authority for military operations, training, logistics, and the necessary administrative functions to operate their commands. Previously, the Services had the responsibility for administration and operation of the combat forces during peacetime. This created problems with regard to how forces were trained. The bill attempted to make the Services and the unified and specified commander work closer together in a spirit of jointness. Unfortunately not all of the problems between the Services and the unified and specified commands have been resolved.

For example, the Transportation Command mission statement does not specify whether its duties are to be carried out in peacetime or wartime. This creates problems when Transportation Command attempts to standardize and consolidate the different service logistics computer networks. Each service is resisting changes to its systems for several reasons. Each service has its own network and has it integrated into its operations. Each service's bases and units tie into their own network with their supply system and a change would also necessitate changing that part of their logistics structure. The major obstacle is money with an infringement on other service's logistical and supply networks coming a close second. Is Transportation Command going to pay for the changes from their operating budget or will the services be tasked to pay for changes to their logistics computer systems? I believe that is a question which will be debated for a long time and in the meantime Transportation Command will not be fully capable.

Transportation Command's most important contribution may be a master transportation and logistics plan which integrates all of the unified and specified commanders' wartime reinforcement and resupply requirements. This will help the United States military identify transportation shortfalls both in terms of carriers and the time required to move the personnel, equipment and supplies; supply

congestion points and potential equipment supply shortages. By putting together a master transportation plan, Transportation Command will be able to validate the resupply time and tonnage requirements that have been planned for by the unified and specified commanders in their war plans. By documenting what is required in terms of manpower, airlift, sealift and ground movement, Transportation Command will have a better case for force structure changes in its budget. I believe this is one area which will directly contribute to realization of the requirement to achieve certain strategic objectives because shortfalls in time, carriers and supplies are quantifiable.

Similar problems such as lack of common networks and dissimilar equipment can be highlighted in some of the other command relationships. For example, within Central Command there are various war plans which task different forces in each service. An air campaign would require strikes against specified ground targets. According to the Goldwater-Nichols Law, the air component commander should be able to task the necessary air forces to accomplish the mission. However, it has been stated by some senior Navy personnel that they would never allocate or chop any of their forces to another commander. Granted the Navy has a special mission in a single dimension, the ocean, but with an attitude such as not chopping Navy forces, operational plans

which depend on Navy assets but which would be withheld in a conflict, will severely impair the United States military's ability to meet strategic objectives. There are other command relationships which need to be addressed. One involves the relationship of the Air Force's Tactical Air Command (TAC), the Air Force itself and the unified and specified commands which TAC supports. If TAC were to be made a subordinate command, it would put TAC in the unified and specified operational chain of command. It would not change the Air Force chain of command and it would provide TAC legitimate control of forward assigned forces. Because of this legitimate chain of command, TAC would be able to establish operating procedures with the unified and specified commanders. Not being designated a subordinate commander requires TAC to be responsive to the unified and specified commanders by a component commander relationship or by specifically establishing memorandums of agreement. It also means that TAC has the responsibility of a specified commander without the title and therefore talks with a subordinate voice rather than the voice of a unified or specified commander. As it stands now, TAC provides the forces for other commanders to use.

Tightly woven into any discussion of military capabilities are the subjects of budgets and forces. While the military departments are not in the operational chain of

command for the forces. they are still responsible for training and supplying the forces used by the unified and specified commanders. The unified and specified commanders formulate the plans to conduct operations within the purview of their area of responsibility and they have responsibility over those forces; but, the service chiefs are still responsible for providing the forces. This arrangement means that the types of weapons and equipment are developed within each service's area according to what each service perceives as the need and each service defends and budgets for that equipment. Of course, to justify the levels and types of forces in the budget, the forces must support unified and specified commanders' operational plans. While individual services will still have to develop doctrine to give structure to their fighting ability, they will no longer be able to individualize their mission. For example, I believe that by using the various unified and specified war plans, the Army can justify its requirement for 18 divisions and the Air Force can show a need for the requirement for 40 tactical fighter wings; however, I do not believe the Navy can make the same case for its desire for 600 ships. The Navy has advocated that if there was a war with the Soviets, their strategy is to engage the Soviets at sea around the world. (9:220-221) The Navy calls this a horizontal escalation. I say the Navy has taken an

independent approach to defining a military strategy to meet their objectives rather than meeting national objectives.

The Army and the Air Force have also worked several memoranda of agreement such as the Air-Land Battle concept. This joint agreement was developed to help the Air Force and the Army work a coordinated plan which would maximize the combined effectiveness of the two forces particularly in the NATO arena: it also provides a program for joint training. The joint training represented by the Army-Air Force memo of agreement is fostered by the Goldwater-Nichols act through the fact that the Secretary of Defense must provide a section in his annual report that justifies weapon programs in terms of strategies. I believe this justification not only integrates forces but provides mutual support for fiscal requirements when new forces and or equipment is developed. These are some of the examples which have increased jointness and improved the United States military's ability to support strategic objectives.

In the Joint Chiefs arena, several of the Goldwater-Nichols changes will definitely improve the United States military's warfighting capability. Congress has mandated that officers serving in joint positions must have an education and or indoctrination in joint matters, that they serve for specific periods of time and that their promotions be equitable with promotion percentages in the Services.

While these initiatives may appear to complicate the Services' traditional leader career patterns (short tour-fast moving promotions). I believe that will work itself out as the services go to longer tour lengths because of budget constraints. The benefit will come with more officers having continuity in joint positions, more officers bringing a broader and formal standardized joint education to their jobs. Also, more 'jointness' educated officers will return to their services with a better overall perspective on how joint operations should function. I believe there will be a positive impact on the military's ability to support national security objectives because officers with more experience and education in the joint arena will be able to make intelligent evaluations of the unified and specified command plans. These officers will be able to provide advice based on training and experience.

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff's position has also been strengthened. The Act stipulates that the Secretary of Defense must provide written guidance for the Chairman to use in reviewing the unified and specified contingency plans. While this initiative will require the Chairman to be actively involved in the contingency planning by the commanders, its real purpose is an effort to make sure that plans meet strategic objectives and national policy. Other changes made by the Act closely relate to

this review requirement. First is the fact that the Chairman is now the principal military advisor to the President, National Security Council and the Secretary of Defense and he can speak with one voice, not a committee. Secondly, the Chairman must advise the Secretary of Defense whether the Military Departments' budgets match the unified and specified commanders' operational plans priorities. I believe these changes make the Chairman, who is the senior military officer, the person responsible for insuring that the United States' military capabilities are within the fiscal constraints established by the Secretary of Defense and that the forces are sufficient in numbers and training to meet the United States' national security objectives. (1:2193)

With regard to the military's ability to meet strategic objectives, I believe the strengthening of the Chairman's position is the most important change made by the law. The Secretary of Defense will have to provide the fiscal constraints and the Chairman will have to evaluate the strategic plans to make sure they are within the Secretary's limits. In addition, if the Chairman does not believe that the fiscal limits allow for buying the number or kind of forces needed, then the Chairman has a means of making his position known. The Chairman, through his net assessment, can now relate force capability to fiscal limits and attempt

to quantify any force shortfall, which equates to risk if the capability is less than the desired strategic objective at each level along the conflict continuum.

Overall, the changes legislated by Goldwater-Nichols are a good beginning to increasing the military's involvement in strategic policy formulation. Through this involvement, the military will be able to structure forces that support national strategic and at the same time acquire forces that are within the fiscal limits set by the country.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The world has changed a great deal since World War II politically, economically and ideologically. Because of those changes and the fact that the countries of the world have become so interdependent, I believe changes to the military in terms of structure and function were inevitable if the military was to remain one of the United States' principal instruments of national power. Goldwater-Nichols changed the command and control functions and the chain of command of the unified and specified commanders. It gave the unified and specified commanders authority to make the strategic and operational plans necessary to deal with the forces in their region of the world. Fully implementing the Goldwater-Nichols changes will strengthen the military capability of the United States.

There is one other aspect of the combatant command structure that I believe should be changed. The Strategic Air Command should be a unified command with all of the strategic nuclear forces coming under control of the strategic unified commander. I believe this would enable the commander to speak with one voice about the United States' nuclear forces, particularly in light of some of the proposed nuclear arms reductions. This move would provide an integrated and coordinated strategic nuclear plan with a

unification of the force structure to support the plans. In addition, this arrangement would remove some of the service parochialism during the budget deliberations.

Service parochialism has been a big hurdle in weapon procurement, operational planning and budget deliberations. This service parochialism has detracted from the United States' ability to achieve its strategic objectives because discussions among the services and Congress centered on the numbers of weapons and where they were built rather than how they supported the national security objectives.

The law has also reduced Congressional involvement by limiting the number of reports and analyses Congress can request. This will allow the services to concentrate on the military aspect of their profession and leave the strategic planning and deliberations to the combatant commanders and the senior military and civilian leaders.

If as the senior military advisor to the President, the National Security Council and the Secretary of Defense, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs can maintain and fulfill the duties and responsibilities detailed by Goldwater-Nichols, I believe that it will be at his position the strategic capabilities, strategic objectives and the fiscal realities will come together. At this point, he will be able to give informed, quantifiable assessments to his superiors and recommend changes to the combatant commanders and the

service chiefs. The responsibilities given to the Chairman form the crux of the Goldwater-Nichols legislation. If the Chairman maintains a strong position and the other changes are fully implemented, I believe the United States military's capability to meet strategic objectives will definitely be increased.

I believe the United States military's ability to meet strategic objectives has definitely been improved by Goldwater-Nichols. Most importantly, strategic thinking is being put in the middle of military capability. For example, because the Secretary of Defense must now include a section in his annual report that justifies the primary military missions such as nuclear deterrence and defense of NATO and relates the military force structure to the missions. This will make the planners in both the military and the civilian staff look at the areas and see if the military weapons fit.

Another portion of the act that requires a consideration of military strategy is the requirement that the Secretary of Defense provide written policy guidance to be used in the preparing and reviewing contingency plans. Again this initiative will make the Secretary of Defense's civilian staff and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs and his staff consider national strategy as an integral part of

military operations. This initiative will also strengthen the Chairman's position in strategy formulation.

I believe Goldwater-Nichols has done much to reverse some of the trends of the 1950s and 1960s in which the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of staff lost some of his influence and responsibility. If the Chairman takes advantage of the opportunity given him under Goldwater-Nichols to review operational plans, make use of his staff to make good net assessments that are linked with strategy and if he does not get mired by service parochialism. I believe the Chairman can make the position more viable. In this case alone, the military's ability to support strategic objectives will be significantly enhanced because an overall net assessment that supports a strategy will make budget deliberations for the weapons to support that strategy more palatable in Congress.

Unfortunately there are two pitfalls. First is the service chiefs. If the service chiefs, particularly the Chief of Naval Operations pushing for 600 ships, continue to strike out individually, this will undermine the Chairman's position. Second, if the combatant commanders continue to push for their own budgets similar to Special Operations Command, this could start a whole new 'conflict' within the military. I can also see where a controversy among the

combatant commanders over forces and budgets could spill over to Congress and therefore undermine the Chairman's position.

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